

REMARKS

5 In the Official Action mailed on December 14, 2005, the Examiner rejected claims 1 – 4, 7, 10, 12 and 16 – 20 and objected to claims 5, 6, 8, 9, 11 and 13 – 15.

Claims 7, 16 and 17 are objected to as being of improper dependent form and failing to further limit the subject matter of a previous claim. In response, claims 7, 16 and 17 have been canceled.

10 Claims 16 – 18 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112. As discussed above, claims 16 and 17 have been canceled. With regard to claim 18, the Examiner questions whether applicants need to insert a second electrode. As an explanation to the terminology of claim 18, applicants respectfully direct Examiner's attention to the fact that the claimed system comprises a first
15 conductive coating, which is now described as a gelcoat material, with carbon particles disposed therein, an electrode, and an electrical current source. The first coating and the electrode are disposed in water which acts as a conductor therebetween. In the final paragraph of claim 18, the electrode is more specifically described as comprising a second gelcoat coating which also comprises the matrix compound material and the carbon particles disposed therein. As a further explanation, when a device, such as a boat, is provided with first and second conductive
20 coatings, it is technically correct and proper to describe one of the coatings as serving the function of an electrode (i.e. using the functional terminology). Naturally, a more basic electrode (i.e. of any appropriate conductive material) could be used in combination with the first gelcoat coating but, as a narrower and more definitive description of the structure described in claim 18, that electrode is more narrowly described as comprising a second gelcoat coating and carbon
25 particles which, in this particular instance, are generally identical in structure to the first gelcoat coating. Applicants respectfully point out for Examiner's consideration that this terminology is intended to describe the two (e.g. port and starboard) hull parts of a boat. One part of the hull (e.g. second gelcoat coating with carbon particles) serves as an electrode (i.e. the more generic terminology) to complete the electrical circuit for the other part of the hull (e.g. the first gelcoat
30 coating with carbon particles). It would also be correct to describe the first gelcoat coating as serving the function of an electrode to complete the circuit for the second gelcoat coating with carbon particles. They each serve the role as "electrode" for the other gelcoat coating, but the

electrode described in claim 18 is specifically described as the “second” coating. Although this description of the subject invention uses slightly different, and narrower terminology than the “first coating” and “second coating” of the earlier claims, applicants respectfully contend that the terminology of claim 18 is no less accurate and no less proper than the earlier claims. In

5 addition, applicants point out for Examiner’s consideration that the term “gelcoat” was chosen for use in claim 18 because of its wide notoriety and familiarity in the field of marine vessels. It can be a less expensive polyester material or a more expensive vinyl ester material or other appropriate materials. Those skilled in the art of marine vessel design are very familiar with the term “gelcoat”, regardless of the specific polymer material used as the matrix material.

10 Applicants also point out for Examiner’s consideration that the gelcoat described in the subject patent application, and in claim 18, is not simply the gelcoat known to those skilled in the art but, in addition, comprises carbon particles disposed within the gelcoat matrix material, which is a non-conductive polymer material.

Claim 1 has been amended to contain the limitations previously contained in claims 2 and
15 5. As a result, claims 2 and 5 have been canceled and claim 3 has been amended to be dependent on claim 1 instead of claim 2 as originally filed. Similarly, claims 6 and 8 have been amended to be dependent on claim 1 rather than claim 2 which has been canceled. Claim 7 has been canceled for the reasons described above. Claim 12 has been amended to claim to the limitation previously contained in claim 13. As a result, claim 13 has been canceled and claim 14 has been
20 made dependent on claim 12 rather than claim 13 as originally filed.

For the reasons described above, claims 16 and 17 have been canceled.

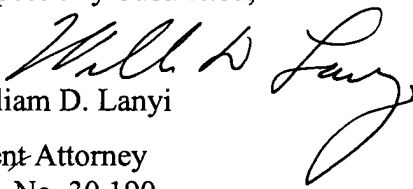
Claim 18 has been amended as shown above to specifically describe the first and second coatings as being made of a gelcoat material and the conductive particles are now described more specifically as carbon particles.

25 Claims 19 and 20 have been canceled.

Applicant intends to provide formal drawings after receipt of the Notice of Allowance to replace the originally filed drawings which, although determined by the Examiner to be suitable for prosecution, are informal.

30 In view of the changes made to the claims of the subject patent application and in further view of the above discussion, applicants respectfully request Examiner’s reconsideration of the subject patent application and expeditious allowance of claims 1, 3, 4, 6, 8 – 12, 14, 15, and 18.

Respectfully Submitted,


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